

30p

What's Doing

JANUARY 2003



The Manchester Beer Drinker's Monthly Magazine

TRACKSIDE STEAMS AHEAD

Bury's beer baron, Martin Jones, also known as 'Arkwright' (as in *Open All Hours*), has opened all hours at the **Trackside** on the East Lancs Railway Station in Bury. He has found his 'Nurse Gladys Emmanuel' (the pub, that is) completely free of tie and the ropes are off!



Andy and Lynn welcome you to

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Trackside Steams Ahead

On the opening night there was Leyden's Forever Bury and Arkwright's Blur (with a lovely picture of Martin on the beer badge), Goose Eye Barm Pot, Halifax's Cock of the North, Brisland's Turkey Bitter, Bushy's Castletown Bitter (from the Isle of Man) and Eastland & Saunders' Beyond the Pale, Bargee and Fireball. Later, Bazen's Black Pig mild came on.

The pub is one long room, adorned with massive lanterns suspended from a wooden arched ceiling. There is comfortable seating and a tiled floor. Food is available.

As I drank, the *Glasgow Highlander* steamed out of the station with a trainload of Christmas diners who'd just had a drink in the pub. It was almost like watching the Orient Express in seasonal regalia. As the crowd watched the train leave, Martin remarked, 'They'll be back at 10.30.'

Dave Hallows

Better Berwick

The **Berwick Arms** on Carnarvon Street, Cheetham, is under new management and the pub is now free of tie. Lees bitter is still on sale, and it was on good form recently; Boddingtons and Holts bitters will be tried and there are plans for guest beers from the microbrewers. The pub has an all-day menu of English and Chinese food.



North Report Part Three

A considerate CAMRA member has supplied Dave Hallows with a complete list of pubs in the North Manchester area. Dave noted that Newton Heath might be a good place to visit...

First was the **Church** (Holts) on Gaskill Street, where cask mild has been reinstated alongside the bitter. I found it passable, though with a tangy aftertaste. The two-room pub is a standard Holts house, busy with Holts A-type clientele - the mainstay support for Holts bitter and always good to see.

I also looked in at the other Holts house in the area - the **Railway** on Dean Lane, by the station. I've been there a couple of times recently and I'm still surprised (and somewhat uneasy) about the method of dispense - fonts for both bitter and mild.

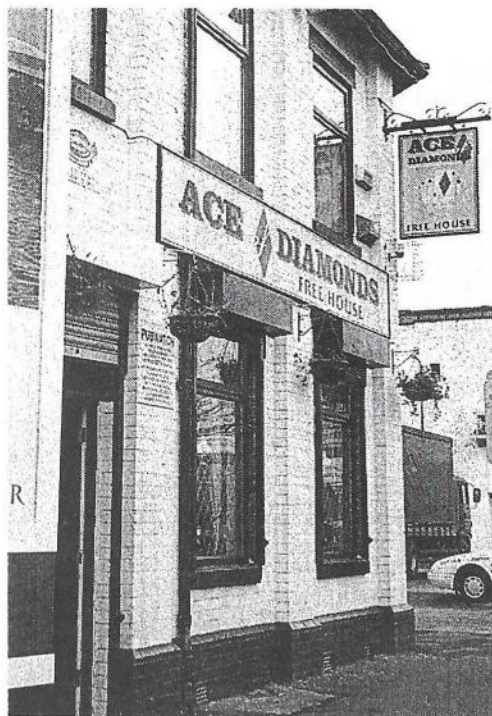
Everything came clear when I called at the **Soap Box** (Banks's) on Culcheth Lane. Formerly called the Newton House, the pub is built like a tower with a small corner entrance that you could easily miss. The beer was Marstons bitter and Banks's Original mild. I found both cold, though the bitter was less cold and quaffable. Both were well kept and crystal clear.

Next was the excellent **Robin Hood** on Droyslden Road, by Brookdale Park, where the Marstons bitter was quaffable and tasty. The pub is homely in both the lounge and long public bar.

Moving on to the **Phoenix** (Lees) on Briscoe Lane (*below*), I found a 1980s building containing a large lounge with stage and a games room (serving as a vault) at the back. Sadly, the GB mild was not on, so I had the bitter. It was slightly hazy, but had a pleasant bittery taste.

Once back on Oldham Road, I hopped on a bus to call in at the **Ace of Diamonds** (formerly Bird in Hand) in Miles Platting. It was my first visit and it was a memorable one! The beers were Thwaites bitter and





Lancaster Bomber, Holts bitter and Saddleworth Shaftbender (5.9%). This pub is the only regular Manchester outlet for Saddleworth beers, which are brewed at the Church Inn, Uppermill. I found the Lancaster Bomber malty and tasty, while the Shaftbender was a tasty, sweetish, strong black porter.

The Ace of Diamonds is warm, friendly and cosy, and quite a select operation in a harsh area of Oldham Road. There is a well appointed bar, with small snug and vault areas at the back. A pub to be recommended, and just outside the city centre.

King's Ale

Leo King

Lancashire Beer Festival

The Lancashire Beer Festival at the **Smithfield Hotel**, Swan Street, Manchester, was a roaring success. Beers from two of the new Lancashire breweries - Ramsbottom Brewery and Bazens in Agecroft - were featured, and there was a 'house beer' from Phoenix of Heywood. Saddleworth Brewery had a beer on, and strangely the pump clip featured a red rose - the Lancashire emblem for a beer from what is historically Yorkshire, the white rose county. No complaints, though, the beer was great!

The Smithfield was packed during the festival (it often gets packed anyway) and the atmosphere was wonderful, so many thanks to Jennifer, Jean and Neville.

East Manchester

Now then. In response to John Clarke's letter in last month's WD, suggesting that I should get out more after I had commented on the lack of decent pubs in East Manchester, I admit that there are **some** pubs in the area. But not many: only a minimal number compared to what there once were. I remember when there were pubs galore along Ashton New Road, together with thriving shops and seven cinemas.

Good grief! Joeys have a website?

Yes, it's true. Go to www.joseph-holt.com. Click on the 'JH' logo on the home page to navigate the rest of the URL. Some of the pages are a little slow in downloading, so be patient.

The company did very well during 2002, opening three new pubs. First, **Wyldes** in Bury was formed from a former Lloyds/TSB Bank; then the refurbished **Broadway** in New Moston reopened as a Holts outlet and to complete the hat-trick, Joeys acquired the **Silver Birch** (ex-S&N Noble House) in Poundswick Lane, Wythenshawe. I hear the Silver Birch has been doing well since it became part of the Holts tied estate, ably run by Denis & Joyce Squires.

Blackwell, the latest seasonal beer, will be on sale at the end of January and beginning of February. It will be brewed using Cascade Aroma hops and the colour will be midway between that of normal bitter and ThunderHolt. The target ABV will be 4.4%. The price had not been decided at the time of going to print, but it will probably be no greater than that of ThunderHolt, which was £1.32 a pint.

The latest list of free trade outlets, where Holts is a guest beer, is printed in this issue. It's good to see the **Horseshoe Inn** on Back Hope Street, Higher Broughton (right), and the **River Inn**, Palmerston Street, Ancoats, on the list for the first time. The **Plough Inn** on Rainsough Brow, which reopened not long ago as a free house, is apparently dispensing huge quantities of Holts bitter.

The **Blue Bell** free house at Shawheath, Stockport, appears to be all boarded up. Let's hope this situation is only temporary, and that the pub will soon reopen with Holts bitter once again on draught.



Astley

Dave White

I like to extol the virtues of public transport on my out-of-town jaunts. This crawl, however, would not have been possible without a chauffeur, at least on a Saturday night: to whom, many thanks.

Our first stop was at the **Old Boat House**, Higher Green Lane, Astley Green. This is a well-appointed, two-room local. The lounge is spacious and diner-friendly. The vault is smaller, with a pool table and tongue-and-groove ceiling and seat-backs. Several sporting shots adorn the walls, particularly of motor cycling and football. Around the date of our visit, OAPs could treat themselves to a festive lunch Monday to Saturday, and there is a play area for the kiddies round the back. Cask ales were Boddingtons bitter and a guest, Hydes Happy Pheasant.

The **Ross's Arms** is but a cockstride away, a busy, open-plan pub with artexed walls made to look like rough plaster. The roof is timber-beamed, with a large collection of brass and copperware in the dining area, and there are several painted windows depicting narrowboats and pitheads. Food is served, though the juke box was an unwelcome distraction. Outdoor play area. Handpumped Boddingtons bitter, Tetley Imperial and Greene King Old Speckled Hen were available.

Our next pub was a new one on me, the **Bulls Head** on Manchester Road. A sprawling, modern, upmarket tavern, with a minimalist interior design. The pub, once known as Madison's, caters for all ages, except children under fourteen. There are several rooms leading off from the main bar, each containing artefacts from Asia, Africa, etc, with living-flame fires and comfortable furnishings. Non-smokers can escape to their own room. Mulled wine is available, but I'd recommend the ale; Tetley bitter, Fullers London Pride and Batemans Rosey Nosey. Pub of the night.

The **Cart & Horses** came next, also on Manchester Road. This three-roomed local has much to recommend it, including a cobbled forecourt, beautiful etched windows, a no-smoking area, a fine marble fireplace in the vault, and a Yorkshire terrier that darts back and forth for no good reason. The beer, Holts bitter and mild, isn't bad either, and the female members of the entourage were particularly impressed by the spotlessness of the ladies' lavatory. The pub was also music-free, unless we were just lucky.


The **Miners Arms**, still on Manchester Road, sadly let the side down, as the one cask ale, Boddingtons bitter, wasn't on; at which point it was time to go home. The beer in the other four pubs, however, was of a very high standard, making Astley well worth a visit.

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No sooner do you record a fact than it becomes obsolete. The **Bank Top**, off King Street, has now reopened, still selling Lees. Managers there seem to be on short tenure these days, so let's hope the latest makes a go of it.

Also reopened is the **Buck & Union** on Union Street, now under Walkabout ownership. The interior has been repainted and most of the bric-à-brac has disappeared, along with the lists of drinking heroes on the walls. As my own name was not among them, I can't justifiably complain on the grounds of personal loss. Perhaps more irritating is the removal of the two largest tables, which were of the old-fashioned type for cards and dominoes, to be replaced by a pool table. Personally I've nothing against the game, except that it tends to attract a certain type of juvenile of excitable nature and fragile ego who regards the cue as an extension of his masculinity, so making him not the world's most cheerful loser.

As for the beer? Well, no more Salamander, Pictish or Boggart. Instead, Greene King IPA, ThunderHolt, Landlord and a rather suggestively named ale from Rays, all between £1.70 and £1.90 a pint. Maybe time will bring us a more exciting list, but knowing the management policy of Walkabout, I'm not holding my breath. On the plus side, their menu is extensive and reasonably priced and they're looking for local talent to do live entertainment. Anything but karaoke, PLEASE!

Round the corner at the **Ashton Arms** on Clegg Street, landlord Dave is still struggling to come to terms with the fact that people, in reasonably large quantities, are coming in to drink cask ale. The problem is that having been financed by Interbrew, he is limited as to what he may or may not sell. However, his shopping list does include Moorhouses Black Cat, Marstons Pedigree and Greene King Abbot, so these, hopefully, will be on offer over Christmas and New Year, together with Hydes seasonal and Robinsons Old Tom. Meanwhile, Castle Eden is 99p and Murphy's (someone's got to drink it) £1. Rumour has it that there may be a guest appearance by Porters Sunshine, *à la recherche du temps perdu*, as Proust put it. Say 'Pretty boy!' to Jasper the African Grey if you drop in.

A quick mention of **Wetherspoons**. Some tasty guests were advertised for the festive season but supply is, as usual, erratic: sometimes two, as, for example, while I am penning this (Oakhams JHB and Caledonian Santa's Helper), but often just a solitary offering and once or twice zero. Complain, like me. It probably has no effect, but it's good for the blood pressure.

But we do have a Christmas gift to gladden the heart. A new micro -

the Greenfield Brewery - or, to be more precise, **The Real Ale Brewery - Greenfield** - set up by Peter Percival, formerly of the **Church Inn**, Uppermill. Peter is an enthusiastic Morris dancer and has enlisted two of his fellow Cloggies in his project. He is, at present, brewing two ales: a golden bitter Bills o'Jack's, named after a famous local double murder (the best possible taste, you might say) and a dark ale similar to the Church Inn's Saddleworth More, only a bit stronger.



I discovered this in the **Rising Sun** in Mossley, a week before the Oldham Chronicle published the details, as the pub was one of the first outlets. Dave at the Ashton swears he will have the stuff on soon. Good news, as I haven't sampled it yet. I must add that the Rising Sun has changed hands and is run by Raisa (daddy was a Cossack) and Stephen Devine, who have maintained the previous policy of selling six real ales - regulars Landlord, Tetley and Black Sheep, plus three guests, one priced at £1.30.

WHAT'S DOING contributions should be sent to the editor c/o 88 Ringley Road, Stoneclough, Radcliffe, Manchester M26 1ET, to arrive no later than first post on the 20th of the month for inclusion in the next month's issue.

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Letters

Beer House

Sir - The days of the 'all year round beer festival' with twelve cask beers may be over, but on my last visit there were seven handpumps selling Brains Rev James, Abbeydale Black Mass, Hook Norton Old Hookey, Shaws Best Bitter, Adnams Fisherman, Greene King IPA and Wychwood Lucifer, plus two cask ciders.

The quality was good and the pub was busy, though there is no food available (apart from barmes). It's good to see the Beer House continuing to make a comeback.

Dave Hallows

On the other hand...

Sir - After a brilliant night at the opening of the Trackside on 13th December, we just had to carry on in the Northern Quarter on the Saturday.

Our usual starting point was the Beer House, but what a let-down. Five beers on the blackboard rapidly dropped to one - our first. Two had gone the night before but hadn't been deleted and the last option went before we even got a half. Starting an afternoon session on Old Tom wasn't a good idea, so we rapidly departed for the other N/4 pubs. The Pot of Beer, Marble Arch and Smithfield were all excellent, as per usual.

So the 'Innspired' chain joins the ranks of Pubmaster as notable wreckers of superb traditional pubs in the area. Why do we spend so much time campaigning about the influence of big breweries when these faceless Pubco bean counters are doing more to reduce our choice of beers and ruining our drinking pleasure?

Alan Ainsworth

Yabba Dabba, Doh!

Fred Flintstone and Barney Rubble reported in the November *What's Doing* that the **Eagle & Child**, Bolton Road, Bury, was selling real ale. Unfortunately, within weeks of a change of management, the handpump was removed.

Fred and Barney are now drinking in the nearby **Arthur Inn** (Porter), which was recently selling Railway Sleeper (4.2%) at £1.30 a pint. This biting bitter was previously available only at Porter's **Railway** in Stockport.

Porter's Christmas beer is called Sleighed - it was 6.9% last year and was dangerously moreish.

A few improvements have been made at the **Knott Fringe Bar**, the Castlefield outpost of the expanding Marble empire. Regular ale drinkers will have noticed a cut in prices for many beers. The 'one price fits all' policy has been dropped in favour of prices relating to strength. So yes, there are still some beers at £2 a pint or even more, but the session beers are typically £1.80 - cheaper, in fact, than most other cask ale outlets round Castlefield, including the more 'traditional' pubs.

The kitchen has been enlarged, as has the food menu. This features an expanded range of vegetarian options (mmm... halloumi kebabs... mmm... as Homer Simpson may have said). I don't know why so many cask ale drinkers tend also to be vegetarians or vegans, but they do. And, of course, they can drink here with a clear conscience as Marble beers eschew the use of animal ingredients. So no isinglass finings, which are infamously derived from the swim bladders of sturgeons and used to 'clear' many beers.



Not the Winter Ales Festival

Altrincham's **Orange Tree** is planning a mini beer festival. The provisional dates are Saturday 15th and Sunday 16th March and being so close to St Patrick's Day, there's a strong chance that some Irish cask ale will be available. The plan is to have a dozen beers on gravity in the upstairs function room, with a further three on handpump in the main bar downstairs. With the **Old Market Tavern** next door also sporting a fine array of handpumps, there should be a couple of dozen beers to choose from.

Top Brewer

John Willie Lees has the friendliest pubs, the best food and bitter that 'people will go out of their way to seek out,' according to the annual survey by Delphi Research. They interviewed 644 pub-goers in the North West to get their opinions on beer, pubs and brands. The most popular bitter was Boddingtons, J W Lees came second and John Smiths was third.

Seasonal salutations to a host of friends! It's been good to meet up with many of you again recently, either on my infrequent forays into Salford and Manchester or when festivals up here have enticed you into Cumbria.

Festivals first, then. **Kendal** was disappointing last year, but decidedly improved this October. Fruity beers seemed to predominate, but the festival beer (1823) brewed by Tirril was thinnish and not over interesting. The **Cockermouth** festival, at the beginning of December, was a first visit for me, but not for some familiar tickers, who immediately welcomed me to the Kirkgate Centre, quite a small venue on two floors, but with a good range of northern beers. Mark Dade's products appear frequently in Cumbria, his Cockermouth offering being Boggart's Balls. My favourites, however, were on the paler side: a dry hopped version of HPA from Crown at Hillsborough, where the hops leapt out of the glass; Foxfield's Lot of Saaz, creamy and toffeeish - really a good light mild; Scawfell from Great Gable, deep gold and smooth; Outlaw Simco (at last!). Best of all was a devastatingly good final pint, the rich and dark Best Cellar from Yates.

Whenever opportunity offers, I head across the Duddon into old Lancashire, with Broughton and Foxfield as obvious destinations. In the former, the **Manor Arms** never fails to satisfy; and at Foxfield - as the railway information board states, the town centre is immediately outside the station - the **Prince of Wales** (below). Stuart and Lynda utterly spoilt us with the beer menu for the Stout and Porter Weekend in late November, including three Foxfield beers and two from Tigertops. Stuart's own Double Stout (7.6%) was gently soothing, while Eastwood and Sanders' 1872 Porter (6.5%) was heavy with liquorice, seaweed and tarmac. A sample straight from the cellar



of Brown Cow Herdsman Porter (4.4%) was intriguing: Newky Brownish in colour, thin and with surprisingly little finish. Nevertheless, I liked it, and found it immensely improved a fortnight later after further maturation: a fuller and much more satisfying drink.

Not many pubs open in Dalton-in-Furness on a wet Monday lunchtime, or indeed any weekday lunchtime. One exception is the **Brown Cow** (below), down a slope from the parish church and reputedly 900 years old. Good food, lined glasses, and a landlord with a ponytail, sandals and shorts and an unabashed contempt for the C-T 'keg rubbish' which supplements the four real ales, all priced at £1.80. I can confirm that Coniston XB does have a hint of geranium, or more precisely of scented pelargonium; while the reddish Hawkshead Best Bitter reminded me of the old Marble Amber Kitchen Ale.



There seems to be a consensus that pubs in Ulverston are not what they were, but that does not mean there are not some worth frequenting. The **Farmers Arms** has a busy lunchtime food trade, and seems popular with young professionals. Four real ales should be available: on my last visit I opted for Hawkshead Best Bitter, this time soothing rather than challenging. The nearby **Kings Head** is now in the hands of Jennings, who will be installing kitchen facilities in the new year to offer good plain lunches. A quiet pub on my last visit, its five handpumps dispensed Dark Mild, Bitter, Cumberland, Snecklifter (5.1%) and La'al Cocklewarmer (6.5%). The last two were both priced at £2.10, so you can guess which I chose. It was worth it!

Nearer to home in Millom, Barn gates' Tag Lag or Cat Nap are regularly among the rotating guest ales at the ever convivial **Rising**

Sun at Haverigg. In the same village, the **Millom Rugby Union Club** has at least two real ales, anything involving Dorothy Goodbody being particularly popular. Both venues will figure in our wassailing crawl this Christmas. For home consumption, Safeway has a decent bottled range, though it cannot compete for variety with the incomparable range (including many BCAs) available at Booths supermarket in Ulverston. The **Punch Bowl** at The Green, three miles out of Millom, used to have a considerable food operation: sadly, no longer, and its only lunchtime opening is on Sunday. But it does have one or two real ales, Deuchars IPA being the most popular choice. The latest news is that just across the road from the Punch Bowl, on the banks of Black Beck, a micro-brewery is now in production, and its first beer (at an unintended 5%) should be available before Christmas. So look out for anything from what may be called the Beck Side Brewery: pressure of work means that you will have a longer wait to sample any MVB products from the Millom Vicarage Brewery.

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Wigan and district

Dave White

Wigan Metro Planning Committee has given the all clear for plans to set up a microbrewery at Wigan Pier. The driving force behind the venture is Ian Thorpe, landlord of the **Anvil** in Wigan centre, and he hopes to be brewing by June. This will be the first brewery in or near the town centre since Moorfield's Atlas Brewery ceased production in 1969. Stay tuned.

In March 2002 I reported that the **Forresters Arms** at Billinge had closed. By the time of the August edition, the pub on Main Street had reopened following a refurbishment. Sadly, this little Burtonwood house has closed once again. A wise man told me that a lack of car parking space had done the second coming of the Forresters no good at all.

Hindley has been a hive of activity lately, though there isn't much for the real ale enthusiast to get enthusiastic about. The **Hockery Brook** on Wigan Road opened its doors again on 19th December, but is still keg. On Lancaster Road, the **Ellesmere Hotel** has reopened after a brief closure. The interior doesn't look any different to me, and the handpumps are still redundant, but at least Burtonwood have removed the misleading sign from the outside, advertising traditional handpulled beers. The **Wiganer**, back on Wigan Road, remained open during its redecoration and cask ale has survived in the form of Lees bitter. The **Hare & Hounds**, a sometime Pubmaster inn on Ladies Lane, has been closed for some time.



The **Crown Hotel**, Wigan Road, New Springs, has also closed. This pub has been on the slippery slope for years and apart from a brief spell around 1998 when Nigel and Elaine tried to make a go of it, has sold only keg beer for nearly as long. Rumour has it that a local entrepreneur is interested in restoring the Crown to its former glory, but there is nothing definite yet. Still, a chance to plug the GBG-listed **Colliers Arms**, just five minutes' walk up the road, should never be missed...

Bazens' Byways

Swinton's favourite brewery has produced **Santa's Reindeer** (4.3%), a light coloured Christmas beer, to be followed in the new year by the medium coloured **Wass Ale** (4.6%).

Black Pig dark mild (3.6%) made an appearance at the opening night of the Trackside, the new East Lancs Railway bar in Bury on 13th December. The Delph Porter clone is at last available and is being sold as **Knowles' Porter** (5.2%). Former associate of Richard Bazen at Bridgewater Brewery, Ken Birch, gave advice and assisted in the brewing of the first batch.



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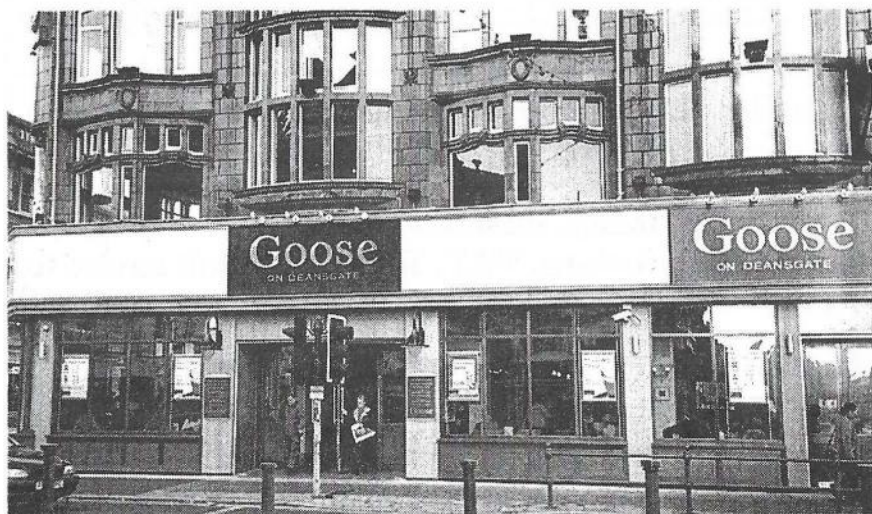
Over the past few months several new bars have opened in Bolton town centre. Trotter joins the pre-clubbing Friday and Saturday night crowd and takes a look...

Maloney's on Nelson Square is a concept bar/restaurant and with a name like that one would be forgiven for thinking the concept is Irishness. Not so. The large, square bar in the centre of this venue specialises in cocktails. For some reason, in a corner near the entrance, there is a set of traffic lights. **Dali Bar** is a two floor venue on Bradshawgate, with reproductions of Salvador Dali paintings on the wall of the upper, chill-out, room. Adjacent to Dali Bar are **Elements** and **Cafe 2-10**. As might be expected, none of these venues sells real ale. On the other side of Bradshawgate, the once-popular **Malt & Hops Bar** remains inoperative and there is no real ale to be found in the Swan Hotel.

On Saturday 14th December I visited the **Moorside Farm** at Swinton for the first time. The pub is on Moorside Road, about ten minutes' walk from Moorside Station and sells a fine pint of handpulled Banks's bitter. Later on the same day I sampled Rosey Nosey, a 4.9% dark brown, fruity ale from Batemans at the **Goose** on Deansgate, Bolton.

The following afternoon was spent at the **Britannia**, Farnworth, supping the seasonal offering from Cropton Brewery, North Yorkshire. The 4.6% Rudolph's Revenge, another dark brown ale, was a damn fine drink.

After I'd written last month's item on Bolton pubs I was told that Tony and Hillary have recently celebrated ten years as mine hosts at the **Hen & Chickens**. Well done!



2043 and all that

Neil Worthington

No, it's not a year. It's just a number. Some readers will be thinking it's vaguely familiar. Others, probably those who always hold their pint glasses up to the light to check that the beer is clear, will already know that it's Britain's most popular Crown Stamp number. But how come it's suddenly everywhere?

The various Weights & Measures Acts require that draught beer and cider be served in measures of a third of a pint or a half of a pint or multiples thereof. Local authorities make checks to see that pubs are using the right size of glasses - or metered pumps, of course. And we know that the glasses hold a pint, or a half pint, because they've been checked and marked with a Crown Stamp.

The little crown is usually sandblasted on after a sample of glasses from each batch has been tested. Along with the crown are the words PINT or PINT TO LINE or PINT ONE GRAD, where there's a half pint line. And there's a number denoting the office or local authority which has actually inspected the glasses. Until recently, there were umpteen different offices up and down the country checking glasses, and there were umpteen different numbers appearing on glasses. But now two things have happened.

One is that certain manufacturers won 'approved verifier' status to certify and stamp their own glasses. The other is that production of glasses has become very much a volume business, where manufacturers produce thousands of glasses at a time to keep the cost down. Several manufacturers have gone bust, or given up on glass making, leaving only a few specialists. For all practical purposes, the only company left making your standard straight pint glass is Cristallerie D'Arques, part of J G Durand & Cie of Arques, just south of Calais in northern France. They are extremely efficient and, for straightforward standard glasses, virtually no-one else can compete. And guess what? Their stamp number is 2043.

So what other numbers are still around? And who or where do they represent? Well, 76 was Manchester. 1370 was Derbyshire, where a lot of beer festival glasses were produced by Dema of Chesterfield. 414 was also Derbyshire. 478 was St Helens. Others we know about were 37 (Sheffield - South Yorkshire trading standards unit), 1207 (also Sheffield), 1545 (Warwickshire), 303 (West Yorkshire) and 562 (Bury).

We are much more likely to see the numbers of the Approved Verifiers. 2037 is Ravenhead Glass in St Helens, who gave up their approval last year, and 2038 is John Artis Ltd of Chessington in Surrey. 2063 is BB Plastics of Mirfield, Yorkshire, who produce (obviously) plastic beer glasses. Will glass collecting now become as popular as collecting beer mats and bottle labels?



Holts in the free trade

Since the list was last published in September 2001, several free trade outlets have begun selling Holts for the first time. Stewart Revell provides the details...

Ace of Diamonds, Oldham Rd, Miles

Platting

Albion, Ashton Old Rd, Higher

Openshaw

Albion, Whitworth Rd, Rochdale

Berkeley Arms, Queens Rd, Southport

Bishop Blaize, Chester Rd, Stretford

Blue Bell, Shawheath, Stockport

Bowling Green, Manchester Rd, Leigh

Bridge Inn, Church St, Horwich

Burlington Vaults, Oldham Rd, Ashton-u-Lyne

Chapel House, Astley St, Dukinfield

Clock Face, Old Hall St, Kearsley

Church Inn, Church La, Uppermill

Church Inn, Church Rd, Flixton

Church Inn, Ford Lane, Pendleton

Colliers Arms, Sale La, Tyldesley

Drovers Arms, London Rd, Allostock, Knutsford

Duke of York, Bolton St, Chorley

Egerton Arms, Gore St, Salford

Fox & Goose, Wigan La, Wigan

Foxhill, Union Rd, Oswaldtwistle

Golden Lion, Llangynafal, Denbigh

Granby Arms, Uppermill

Half Moon, Elliott St, Tyldesley

Hare & Hounds, Shudehill, Manchester

Hargreaves Arms, Manchester Rd, Accrington

Horse Shoe, Bk Hope St, Hr Broughton

House Without a Name, Lea Gate,

Harwood, Bolton

Magnet, Wellington Rd North, Heaton

Norris, Stockport

Masons Arms, Walmersley Old Rd, Bury

Masons Arms, Wigan Rd, Atherton

Nelson, Barlow Moor Rd, Didsbury

Oddfellows Arms, Oldham Rd,

Middleton

Oddfellows, Tottington Rd, Bury

Old Dog, Church St, Preston

Old Man & Scythe, Churchgate, Bolton

Pack Horse, Stockport Rd, Levenshulme

Park, Newbridge La, Stockport

Penny Black, Wotton St, Northwich

Pineapple, Rochdale Rd, Shaw

Platford, Stretford Rd, Hulme

Plough, Rainsough Brow, Prestwich

Queens Hotel, Bank St, Rawtenstall

Railway, Manchester Rd, Broadheath,

River Inn, Palmerston St, Ancoats

Royal Oak, Castle St, Edgeley, Stockport

Royal Oak, Leigh Road, Boothstown

Seven Stars, Ashton Old Rd, Beswick

Silver Springs, Ashton Rd, Denton

Spotted Cow, Bell La, Bury

Spring Rock, Rochdale Rd, Upper

Greetland, Halifax



Strawberry Duck, Crabtree La, Clayton
Tiger Moth, Swallow Drive, Irlam
Travellers Rest, Newton Rd, Lowton
Volunteer, Radcliffe Rd, Darcy Lever
Waterloo, Broughton Rd, Chester
White Bear, Market St, Adlington
White House, Great Ancoats St., M/cr
Winston, Churchill Way, Salford
Witchwood, Old St, Ashton-u-Lyne

The clubs...

Astley & Tyldesley Miners' Institute,
Meanley Rd, Astley
Embassy Club, Rochdale Rd, Harpurhey
Higher Broughton Conservative Club,
Northumberland St

Manchester Tennis & Racquet Club,
Blackfriars Rd, Salford
Moorside Social Club, Moorside Rd,
Swinton
Prestwich Church Inst, Bury New Rd
Prestwich Liberal Club, Bury New Rd,
Royal Naval Association, Greenbrow
Rd, Wythenshawe
Sedgley Park RUFC, Park La, Whitefield
Swinton Catholic Club, Swinton
Village Club, Haigh Rd, Aspull
Wingates Labour Club, Chorley Rd,
Westhoughton
Winston Conservative Club, Hall La,
Wythenshawe

Curry corner

Saffron

The Saffron Buffet on Cheetham Hill Road (*featured in WD Oct 2001*) is now opening midday, 12noon to 2pm. There are fewer dishes to choose from and this is reflected in the price - all you can eat for £5, as opposed to £9.95 for the full menu in the evenings. Drinks are the only extras. The Saffron is in the former Cheetham Town Hall, near the Derby Brewery Arms. Tel. 834 1222.

Full of Eastern Promise

On 12th December, after a pint or two of Holts mild and bitter in the Railway, Broadheath, members of the Trafford & Hulme Branch of CAMRA had their Christmas Curry in the Eastern Promise Curry House. An excellent meal was enjoyed by all.



Rupert

Bunty had persuaded us all, perhaps against our better judgement, to spend the Christmas period down in Smokeley to honour the Beer Drinker of the Year. For once, Mr Balloon's iron horse was reasonably priced and on time, so we were off to a good start. Bunty ushered us all into the subterranean rail system and, when we emerged some 25 minutes later, I thought I was back in Grotley. The first sight to confront us was a boarded up hostelry - this in a reasonable northern suburb near a Premiership football ground. Surely the Grotley disease had not been caught by S m o k e l e y ? Apparently it had. This hostelry was not alone. Hotels were out on price, so we dossed down in a dilapidated mansion owned by one of Bunty's bohemian southern friends.

Grotley prices certainly haven't caught on in Smokeley. Fiona began her well-practised rationale about why tins of beans at Sainsbury's are the same price in Gateshead and Guildford, but your foaming pint of amber nectar ain't. And isn't it funny how a pint from one of Smokeley's independent ale manufacturers is

exactly twice the price of our own beloved Drabs? Not that we were abstemious. We had thought that Bunty would get into trouble with bunches of southern wasps but we were forgetting his pedigree and discounting seasonal goodwill.

At least some things don't change. We got the distinct impression that the taverns were packed to the gunwales with amateur imbibers, those who don't set foot in licensed premises from one Christmas to the next. New technology has made photocopiers redundant as a merry jape. No longer the danger of sherds of glass in photocopied bottoms. Oh, no, as

Mr Major was wont to say. Enter the new picture messaging mobile phone. Ubiquitous in Japan some years ago, they are now commonplace in Smokeley and will soon become so in Grotley. I can hardly wait. A few alcopops too many at the office shindig and it's up your blouse, down your trousers and bingo, instant rudery transmitted halfway round the world. They never did that in Japan. No imagination or

sense of humour. I suppose that the boys and girls in blue will be busy looking through millions of transmitted pictures to see if they can get anyone bang to rights. What is the world coming to?



Branch Diary

Regional Meeting
Weds 8 Jan 8.00pm, Vine,
Kennedy Street, Manchester

Rochdale, Oldham & Bury

Tues 7 Jan 8.30pm, Branch Meeting,
Ring o'Bells, St Leonards Square,
Middleton

Sat 25 Jan 8.30pm, Social: Marble Brewery visit and Manchester
centre pubs

Tues 28 Jan 8.30pm, Committee/What's Doing collation, Healey
Hotel, Shawclough Road, Rochdale

Sat 1 Feb 12noon, GBG 2004 selection, Old Boars Head, Long Street,
Middleton

Contact: Peter Alexander 0113 232 4023(w), 0161 655 4002 (h)
email: P.Alexander@Virgin.net

North Manchester

www.camra.org.uk/nmanchester

Wed 15 Jan 8pm, Branch Meeting: Crescent, Salford

Wed 22 Jan, Social, Plough, Rainsough Brow, Prestwich. Bus 93 at
7.30 from Cannon Street to Kersal Vale or 92 at 7.31 from Pendleton
Precinct to Hilton Lane/Sandy Lane

Tues 28 Jan 6pm, What's Doing collation, Queens Arms, Honey St,
Cheetham

Wed 29 Jan 8pm, GBG 2004 shortlisting, Kings Arms, Bloom St,
Salford (side room)

Wed 5 Feb 8pm, Talk by Holts Head Brewer (Keith Sheard), Derby
Brewery Arms (upstairs room), Cheetham Hill Road

Contact Roger Hall 0161 740 7937

Trafford & Hulme

www.camra.org.uk/trafford

Thurs 9 Jan 8.00pm, Branch Meeting at the Old Market Tavern

Wed 22 Jan, Survey/Social in Chorlton: Beech 7.30pm, Trevor Arms
8.30pm, The Bar 9.30pm

Sat 25 Jan, Coach to Burton Winter Ales Festival (Contact Joan on
962 2396 for details)

Thurs 6 Feb 8.00pm, Branch Meeting at the Old Market Tavern

Contact: Dave Ward 0161 980 1170

Wigan

Contact: John Barlow (01257) 478816 (w), 427595 (h)
email john@misltd.co.uk

Contributors to this issue: Neil Worthington, Brian Taylor, Dave
Hallows, Tarka Dhal, Duncan Busman Pete Cash, Stewart Revell,
Leo King, Dave White, Roger Hall, Daddy Bell, Michael Lynn, Paul
Warbrick

Dave and Sue welcome you to

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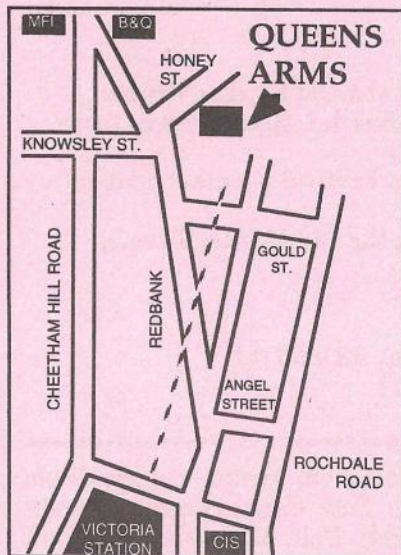
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City Life Manchester Food & Drink Festival
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PUB QUIZ

Tuesday, 9.30pm start

BEER GARDEN

with children's play area

FAMILIES WELCOME

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**GOOD BEER
GUIDE 2003**

